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COUNTRY Austria

REPORT NO.

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TOPIC Separation of Western Austria and Vienna.

EVALUATION

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DATE OF CONT

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REFERENCES

PAGES 2 ENCLOSURES (NO. &amp; TYPE)

REMARKS

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1. A Times article \* on new Anschluss trends in Western Austria set off a lively discussion among Linz industrialists. They comment on this and the question of a separation of Western Austria from Vienna chiefly from an economic point of view. Their feeling is that Vienna must be blamed for the financial difficulties of Austria as the majority of the millions of people residing there is without productive jobs. Having lost its previous importance for Austria, Vienna is now nothing but a public burden. From the state treaty will also result liabilities for the USIA enterprises etc. and thus new burdens to the federal countries. On the other hand, there would be excellent prospects of prosperity in these federal countries were they separated from the Soviet Zone. Taxes could be substantially reduced and the Vienna population would no longer be a drain on the foreign currency proceeds of the industries in the federal countries. Foreign currency made from tourists could also be utilized in Western Austria by trade and industry.
2. This argument, although economic in essence, is also influenced by politics. Full of distrust against Vienna government agencies because of their efforts to nationalize industrial combines along socialist lines and aware that such socialist tendencies have their strongest backing in Vienna Socialists, the Austrian industrialists argue that domestic peace would be achieved the moment Vienna was separated. In their eyes it was Vienna that made all attempts to solve the denazification problem fail.
3. There are many reasons for this opposition to Vienna. The pride in Vienna's cultural importance, once so great a factor in Austria's federal countries, no longer outweighs the general aversion which also expresses itself in the feeling that Vienna is Austria's evil spirit in the field of foreign trade. There is a consensus of opinion that a separation of Western Austria from Vienna would automatically lead to a customs union between Western Austria and Germany or Italy, and such a development is welcomed in the hope that, with the US Zones in Austria and Germany being neighbors, free

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trade with Western Germany as a whole could finally be made possible and thus a better situation for trade, industry and tourists in 'estern Austria.

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Comment:

\* The Times article mentioned is unknown.

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